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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC 03966-85
7 August 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Chairman, National Intelligence Council Y

FROM: Charles E. Allen
National Intelligence Officer for Counterterrorism and
Narcotics

SUBJECT: Briefing of Admiral James L. Holloway III, USN (Ret.),
Executive Director of the Vice President's Task Force on
Combatting Terrorism

1. On 26 July, Generals Gorman and Whitehead and ADM Holcolm visited me for a briefing on current Intelligence Community capabilities to support counterterrorism. They informed me that they are serving as consultants to Admiral Holloway, Executive Director of the Vice President's Task Force on Combatting Terrorism. Following our discussion, Paul Gorman asked if I would brief the same information to ADM Holloway. I did this on 2 August, accompanied by [REDACTED] who has been designated the CIA member on the Task Group's staff, and my assistant [REDACTED] Paul Gorman, Ennis Whitehead, and Stacer Holcolm also attended.

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2. I recapped for ADM Holloway the terrorist threat, the Intelligence Community's general capabilities against that threat, and a number of efforts underway to improve those capabilities. For his part, ADM Holloway made the following points which may be of interest:

- A major aspect of the work of the Task Force will be public in nature. An unclassified version of the Task Force report or perhaps a White Paper will be issued for public dissemination. Its purpose will be to educate the public regarding the nature of the threat, current US efforts to combat it, the inevitability of occasional failure, and the need to persevere despite failure. The classified Task Force report itself will review the US Government's structure and capabilities to combat terrorism and will contain recommendations to the President on those areas that need improvement.

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- Congressional leaders have demonstrated considerable interest in the Task Force. A Senate caucus on terrorism has recently been established consisting of seven senators. Senator Denton, one of those seven, has been particularly vocal about participating in the Task Force. ADM Holloway has kept him at a distance with Constitutional arguments regarding separation of powers.
- The Task Force will listen to all critics and experts, public and private; it will solicit their advice and cooperation. In so doing, it will help educate the public through media coverage, and perhaps even co-opt a few of its opponents.
- The Task Force's Review and Working Groups will do most of the work with the Executive Branch. Departments and agencies will be asked for their resource requirements. ADM Holloway is sanguine about the prospects of a supplemental appropriation. He thinks it would constitute a highly visible commitment that would underline Administration resolve.
- ADM Holloway does not expect to find the counterterrorism community an "ugly mess." He anticipates the US counterterrorism effort is, "about 80 to 85 percent on the mark. It just needs some work around the edges."
- ADM Holloway characterized himself as "not a dyed-in-the-wool counterterrorist." He does not see the problem as having the stature of the SDI and perhaps other Administration priorities. When challenged, however, by General Gorman on the devastating effect terrorism can have on US foreign policy, he conceded that terrorists have undone a previous administration and are creating problems for the current one.
- The question of what constraints exist with respect to intelligence operations was raised and whether the Intelligence Community will recommend changes to legislation. I replied that I had planned to meet on this subject with members of the Directorate of Operations and the Office of General Counsel and would be prepared to discuss the matter sometime thereafter. At this point, however, it is our understanding that restraints are imposed primarily by Executive Order.
- ADM Holloway concluded by announcing that AMB Ed Peck would serve as Deputy Director of the Task Force. The first meeting of the Working Group is scheduled for 8 August in the Jackson Place townhouse which will serve as Task Force headquarters.

3. Throughout the briefing, ADM Holloway appeared interested and supportive. Terrorism is a new subject to him, and he clearly has much to learn. I offered to provide him with an overall worldwide threat briefing. He stated he probably would want to have the briefing, once he has settled into his premises at Jackson Place.


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